

Advance Plans Committee: 2003-4 Comprehensive Plan Update

Summary of Meeting #14

7:30 am, October 21, 2004

Attendance

Committee Members: Morris Dunlap, Bud Hentzen, John McKay, Elizabeth Bishop

MAPD staff: Dave Barber, Scott Wadle, John Schlegel

Discussion Summary

1. REAP Regional Water Coalition – Bob Meyer, Attorney, City of Newton

- ❑ Bob Meyer explained that he serves as the Chair of the REAP Water Working Group. This group was appointed by the REAP Executive Committee with a charge to explore regional water issues in south-central Kansas, and encourage a more collaborative approach on municipal water supply and quality issues.
- ❑ To this end, a new group has recently been formed called the South Central Kansas Water Coalition, covering a nine county area and an approximate population base of over 730,000 (1/4 of the State's population in a 9 county area). This area is a homogeneous economic unit with shared water supply issues, encompassing the Walnut, Lower Arkansas and Upper Arkansas River basins.
- ❑ Some facts: 91% of the water supply in the Lower Ark basin is derived from groundwater; 88% of the water supply in the Walnut Basin comes from surface water; 74% of the water usage in the Lower Ark basin is for irrigation agriculture, 15% is for municipal use, 6% is for industrial use and the balance is for miscellaneous uses; in the Lower Ark and Walnut basins, 30-40% of water right holders do not have sufficient appropriated water to serve their future water needs.
- ❑ There is a need to balance water needs with water supply.
- ❑ In the Walnut Basin, TMDL is the main concern along with public water infrastructure issues.
- ❑ In the Lower Arkansas Basin, the fragile nature of the Equus Beds aquifer (shallow ground water, sandy soils and saline pollution issues) is the key issue.
- ❑ There are 9 government agencies, numerous regional groups and water management districts involved in water management. There is no sole group or agency overseeing or coordinating the management of the region's water resources, neither is a regional voice in Topeka. The State has expressed a positive response to the regional coalition concept.
- ❑ There is a need to develop a regional water plan to address the long-term water supply and quality issues for this region. We need to enhance monitoring. We need to support each other, not battle one another. A regional approach has economic advantages in terms of the possibility of shared staff and shared costs of consultants. The regional approach could be funded through the water utilities rates, rather than an increase of mil levies. . Ultimate implementation of a regional water plan must be at the local level through plans, policies and procedures.

The Advance Plans Committee adjourned at 8:45 a.m. Next Committee meeting scheduled for 7:30 a.m., November 4th.